

TESTIMONY
of

Monica Forbes

Before the Appropriations Committee
of the
Connecticut General Assembly

February 11, 2010

Chairpersons Sen. Toni Harp and Rep. John Geragosian and Honorable

Members of the Appropriations Committee my name is Monica Forbes. I am here

today to testify **in support of the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program and ask you to retain the line item funding for this essential program.**

In 2006 my family experienced a crisis. My 103 year old grandmother was dying – and although she lived in a nursing home nearby, seemed to only eat when I fed her at lunchtime. My 80 year old father was hospitalized and subsequently diagnosed with prostate cancer, and my mother had Alzheimer's Disease.

Since my father was her primary care giver, my mother came to live with my family. My husband and I both worked full-time, and our children were very young, ages 2 and 4. Although we happily welcomed her to live with us, I was overburdened with all of the changes that were occurring.

I met a phenomenal Social Worker from the REACT/REACH program formerly sponsored by the Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging, Marcia Figowy. She introduced me to the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program.

I applied for the grant, and immediately received financial assistance for Adult Day Care Services.

On another occasion, I applied for the grant to pay for a short term nursing home stay for my mother, while I attended an out of town meeting.

And in 2008, I applied for the grant and received funding for my mother to receive a live-in aide, while my family and I went on vacation and attended my husband's graduation in Boston.

My mother, Pauline Gray, is 77 years old, and has Alzheimer's disease. As the disease progresses, her needs increase, and that's why I wholeheartedly support the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program.